
SENATE BILL 5539

State of Washington 59th Legislature 2005 Regular Session

By Senators Jacobsen, Oke, Rasmussen, Doumit, Schmidt, Benson, Kastama, Shin, Pridemore, Franklin and Roach

Read first time 01/27/2005. Referred to Committee on Natural Resources, Ocean & Recreation.

1 AN ACT Relating to restoring Washington's watersheds with help from
2 postconflict veterans; adding new sections to chapter 77.85 RCW;
3 creating a new section; and making an appropriation.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that many Washington
6 citizens are veterans of armed forces conflicts that have important
7 skills that may be employed in projects that help to protect and
8 restore Washington's rivers, streams, lakes, marine waters, and open
9 lands. The legislature further finds that such work has demonstrated
10 benefits for many veterans who are coping with posttraumatic stress
11 disorder or have other mental health or substance abuse disorders
12 related to their service in the armed forces. Therefore, it is the
13 purpose of this chapter to create a program that provides state funding
14 assistance for projects that restore Washington's waters, forests, and
15 habitat through the primary participation of such veterans.

16 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 77.85 RCW
17 to read as follows:

18 The veterans conservation corps program account is created in the

1 state treasury. Money appropriated to the account by the legislature,
2 and federal funds, grants, or gifts provided to the state for the
3 program, must be deposited into the account. Money in the account may
4 be spent only after appropriation. Money in the account may be
5 expended for grants by the salmon recovery funding board under section
6 3 of this act, and for the reasonable administrative costs of the
7 salmon recovery funding board in making such grants.

8 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 77.85 RCW
9 to read as follows:

10 (1) The veterans conservation corps program is created. The
11 program shall be administered by the salmon recovery funding board
12 through the award of grants for projects to restore Washington's
13 watersheds and forests, consistent with the criteria and procedures set
14 out in this section.

15 (2) When considering and acting upon grant applications under this
16 section, the director of the department of veterans affairs, or the
17 director's designee, shall participate as a voting member of the board.
18 The salmon recovery funding board shall consult with the department of
19 veterans affairs in the review of applications for project grants to
20 determine whether the project will involve volunteers or employees that
21 are veterans coping with posttraumatic stress disorder or related
22 disorders from their service in the armed forces.

23 (3) From funds appropriated to the salmon recovery funding board
24 for the purposes of this section, the board may make grants to eligible
25 applicants for projects to restore the state's watersheds and forests.
26 The salmon recovery funding board shall award grants on a competitive
27 basis, and shall make grants to applicants that meet the following
28 qualifications:

29 (a) The project is included within a salmon recovery plan or
30 habitat project list under this chapter, a watershed plan adopted under
31 chapter 90.82 RCW, a water clean-up plan under chapter 90.48 RCW, or a
32 similar watershed-based plan;

33 (b) The project applicant demonstrates that at least seventy-five
34 percent of the grant funds will be expended directly on activities in
35 which veterans coping with posttraumatic stress disorder will be
36 participating, either as volunteers, contractors, or employees; and

1 (c) The applicant is a nonprofit, nongovernmental organization,
2 tribal entity, or unit of state or local government.

3 (4) No more than twenty-five percent of the funds available during
4 a fiscal year must be awarded to a single applicant.

5 (5) The salmon recovery funding board shall require recipients of
6 grants to provide periodic reports to the board on the progress of
7 project implementation and to document the participation of veterans
8 coping with posttraumatic stress disorder.

9 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** The sum of five million dollars, or as much
10 thereof as may be necessary, is appropriated for the biennium ending
11 June 30, 2007, from the state building construction account to the
12 veterans conservation corps program account, to be expended by the
13 salmon recovery funding board to carry out the purposes of this act.

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